



[If you haven't already, begin your meal with meal prayer, then take turns reading these boxes aloud, following the directions where applicable]

Blessed are those who Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness

In Jesus' day, food and water were scarce and people were often hungry and thirsty. In our culture, food and water are plentiful, so we miss the urgency Jesus intended. Hungry, thirsty people work hard, urgently, to gain food. To hunger and thirst for righteousness, then, means we should urgently pursue righteousness (God's law). Disciples develop this hunger by practicing the first three beatitudes (poverty, mourning, and meekness). Then, thirsty disciples pursue the mercy, purity, and peacemaking of the next few beatitudes (vv. 7-9). To hunger for righteousness is to yearn for God's rule in our lives. It is to have a thirst for God's Word and presence. This hunger leads us to personal righteousness, by asking the Holy Spirit to uproot our sin and become more like Jesus. It also leads to social righteousness, promoting God's vision in business, education, politics, and more. Further, we look to the day of Jesus' return, when He will set creation right, Satan will be overthrown, and God's righteousness will cover the earth.

Ash Wednesday

Feb 22nd is Ash Wednesday - the first day of Lent. On Ash Wednesday, we attend Mass and receive ashes in the sign of the cross on our foreheads. Ashes have a long history of being an outward action expressing interior sorrow and repentance. The words we hear, "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return." remind us of our death, but also that death is not the end. Because of sin, our bodies will turn to dust. But because of Jesus' sacrifice, one day those who remain in the Lord will be raised up to new, eternal life.

Lent is a season that helps us prepare for Easter in many ways, but especially by making sacrifices. These sacrifices include days of fasting, days of abstaining from meat, and choosing to do special prayers or personal sacrifices throughout Lent.

Ash Wednesday is one of the days of fasting and abstinence. Our physical hunger on this day can help us grow our spiritual hunger for God's presence in our lives and our desire for righteousness.

Discussion

[These questions are a spark for conversation, not a strict outline.]

- What can you recall about the beatitudes we discussed so far?
- Which of God's laws (personal or social) are easiest or hardest for you to follow? Why?
- Many of us are satisfied with just getting by in our relationship with God: being content to grab "fast food" instead of going for the "real meal." What are the ways you interact with God that truly feed your soul? How can you stir up a hunger and thirst for real interactions with God and others?

Activity & Prayer

[For this activity section, you will need the additional resource provided by the parish. If you don't have it, you can download it on our website]

Play a meekness game or complete the demonstration together.

Review the Lenten ideas sheet and choose one or two that your family will begin next week on Ash Wednesday.

End by praying the Beatitudes Prayer

Lord, make me poor spirit, so I can receive the kingdom of heaven.

Lord, when I mourn, help me find comfort.

Lord, make me meek, so that I may inherit the land.

Lord, help me to hunger and thirst for righteousness, so I may be satisfied.

Lord, make me merciful, so I may obtain your mercy.

Lord, make me pure of heart, so I may see you.

Lord, help me to make peace, so I may be called your child.

Lord, when I am persecuted for righteousness' sake, show me your kingdom.

Extras

- How to respond when you are wearing ashes (3 min)

<https://watchformed.org/march-2-ash-wednesday/videos/what-s-the-deal-with-ashes-on-ash-wednesday>

- Learn about Lent for kids

<https://watchformed.org/march-2-ash-wednesday/videos/let-s-learn-about-lent>

- 5 minute reflection on Ash Wednesday - see additional weekly Restore Lenten Series videos

<https://watchformed.org/videos/ash-wednesday-transformation>

- A deeper dive into the season of Lent

<https://watchformed.org/videos/whole-40-making-a-spiritual-plan-for-lent>

- MANY ideas for celebrating Lent as a family

<https://www.catholicicing.com/lenten-activities-for-children/>

- More about fasting and abstinence rules

<https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year-and-calendar/lent/catholic-information-on-lenten-fast-and-abstinence>

Sacramental Life

This week's journal prompt for first reconciliation/communion: *Jesus said DO GOOD TO THOSE WHO HATE YOU. (Lk 6:27b) - What do you think he meant by this? How would you do this?*

This week's confirmation work is: **The Sacraments of Initiation** Watch Decision Point 7.4: The Power of the Eucharist Why is the Eucharist the best way to receive God's grace?

Links & information found at <https://stauginestedward.org/confirmation-preparation/>

Looking Ahead

For Next Week, Feb 22:

- No COR guide next week - attend Ash Weds Mass

Coming Up:

- Confirmation AND First Reconciliation/Communion Students - your whole family should plan to attend on March 8 6-8 pm at St Augustine for a formation night.

